



## NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION

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# Pesticide Advisory

## A Public Health Message To Needham Residents

The Needham Health Department recommends that homeowners learn about the dangers of pesticides and seek to eliminate pesticide use in their yards and homes.

According to the U.S Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), pesticides such as herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, and "Weed & Feed" products are harmful to some degree. The widespread use of pesticides is a major environmental and public health concern. Despite having an EPA registration, most pesticides have not been adequately tested to determine their effects on the health of people, pets, and the environment.

Children are the most vulnerable to the harmful effects of pesticides due to physiological and age-related factors. The American Public Health Association recognizes that even a small amount of chemical exposure during critical periods of development can have irreversible health effects. Scientific studies reveal that exposure to common lawn care pesticides is linked with a possible increased risk of several types of cancer, neurological and respiratory diseases, hormone disruption, birth defects, and damage to the kidneys and liver. Pesticides also disrupt our ecosystems since they're hazardous to birds, fish, beneficial insects, and non-target plants.

Recognizing the danger of widespread pesticide use, the Town of Needham follows integrated pest management (IPM) policies, relying heavily on organic land care management. Pesticides are used only as a last resort to reduce other immediate, health and safety-related concerns. In Needham, areas such as the Town Common and the Needham Heights Common are 100% pesticide-free.

Still, the most significant environmental source of pesticide contamination and exposure to children in Needham is likely from residents' yards, lawns, and runoff from excessive or inappropriate use. Unfortunately, pesticides also kill microbial life and beneficial insects necessary for a healthy lawn, creating a costly chemical dependency. It's time to quit the cycle. Make Needham a safer place for your family and neighbors by eliminating your personal pesticide use and opting for safer alternatives.

To learn more about organic land care, review the Healthy Lawns & Landscapes brochure, contact the Needham Health Department, and check out the following websites:



<https://www.beyondpesticides.org/resources>



<https://www.greenneedham.org/blog/zero-waste-main-page-2/s>

**Introduction to Organic Lawns and Yards**  
[https://cdn.canr.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2018/04/12024352/Intro\\_to\\_Organic\\_Lawns\\_and\\_Yards.pdf](https://cdn.canr.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2018/04/12024352/Intro_to_Organic_Lawns_and_Yards.pdf)